

Williamson, Vicki 2008. *The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) Research and Education Agendas*, Presentation at the National Summit on Library Human Resources, Ottawa ON, October 6-7.

Purpose of this presentation

In the limited time available today, I want to overview the work undertaken from 2006 to 2008 by the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), Education Working Group, which has resulted in the CARL Research and Education Agendas.

Through my short presentation, I hope to leave you with some context as to what has been the response of the research libraries since the 8Rs Research (*The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries*, 2005 and the *Training Gaps Analysis for Librarians and Library Technicians*, 2006) was published. What I present is a mini case study of how a sector determines its priorities and acts on them.

I hope it will provide a useful example and further inform the important discussions to be had over the next few days.

Events leading up to the establishment of the CARL Education Working Group

June 20, 2006 – The members of the Canadian Council for Information Science (CCIS) met with a delegation from CARL Directors in what has become known as the Toronto meeting.

Those attending discussed opportunities for on-going co-operation between the faculties of library and information science and Canada's research libraries and to identify some areas of mutual interest worthy of further exploration.

November 2006 – CARL Directors, at their fall meeting in Vancouver and as a follow-up to the Toronto meeting, formally established the mandate and terms of reference for an Education Working Group.

Terms of reference

The mandate of the group was:

- To initiate and co-ordinate on-going discussion, and relationship-building between CARL and others interested in the education of librarians, such as CCIS and CLA.
- To identify next steps for CARL in possible collaboration with CCIS, including the identification of areas/projects for joint action
- Working with other groups, such as the CLA President's Council on the 8Rs, identify actions arising from the recommendations of The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries and other related studies as these relate to Canada's research libraries and their role
- To recommend to the Board actions arising out of the above
- To report regularly to the Board and to the membership at General Meetings
- In conjunction with the Treasurer of the Board, to draw up an annual budget for the work of the Working Group for submission to the Board of Directors

The group was requested to submit a final report to the CARL Board at the Annual General Meeting in May 2008.

Membership of the group varied but between its establishment in 2006 and the presentation of its report in Spring 2008 the following contributed to the work of the group:

- CARL Directors: Vicki Williamson (University of Saskatchewan); Ernie Ingles (University of Alberta); Marnie Swanson (University of Victoria); Leslie Weir (University of Ottawa); Joyce Garnett (University of Western Ontario); Jeffrey Trzeciak (McMaster) and Margaret Haines (Carleton).
- Research Support was provided by Jane Lamothe (University of Saskatchewan).

The group communicated and worked closely with the 8Rs Research Team and the then CCIS Chair, Dr Fiona Black. Timothy Mark, former CARL CEO was especially supportive and engaged with the work of the group.

Outcomes

The deliberations of the group resulted in the following outcomes:

- *Library Education Working Group: Final Report to the CARL Board of Directors* [http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/untitled/0802e_libeduwrk_report.pdf]. It contains 17 recommendations for future action by CARL to further advance its Research and Education Agendas.
- *Library Education Working Group National Research Agenda Survey* [Survey results parts 1 and 2](#) . This survey work, undertaken by Jane Lamothe and myself in 2007, identified over 100 'hot topics/burning questions' of interest to CARL Directors and worthy of further investigation and/or research. A preliminary announcement of the research findings was made through the CARL e-Lert #265, February 15, 2008, under the title of *What keeps CARL Directors' awake at night?* The survey results form the basis of the CARL National Research Priorities.
- *Research Competencies Course for Librarians of CARL Member Institutions: Request for Proposals* [http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/carl_education_product_description_may2007.pdf]. This was originally developed by the 8Rs Team at the request of the group as a product brief for response from faculties of library and information science. It has now been made available as *Research Competencies for CARL Librarians* and as

a guide to good practice for CARL Directors seeking to source research skills training for the librarians.

Where to from here.....

In May 2008 the CARL Board received the group's final report and resolved (Board 19/E – 2008) to extend the life of the group for a further year to oversee the action items.

Margaret Haines from Carleton University is now the Chair.

The report was also discussed at a half-day focus workshop by CARL Directors in May 2008. Therefore, CARL members come to this National Summit with some clear agenda items and some areas where we know there is interest from within CARL in moving forward.

Time does not permit me to discuss in any detail the 17 recommendations contained in the report. As previously mentioned, and in broad terms the recommendations cover ways to further develop and focus CARL's Research and Education Agendas.

It is envisaged that the *CARL Research Agenda* will be comprised of 3 components:

- A set of research priorities for CARL libraries, based on the 'burning questions' survey work undertaken by Lamothe & Williamson (2007).
- A program to train practicing academic libraries in research methodologies.
- A repository that will gather and disseminate information on current and ongoing LIS research, sabbatical topics and substantive research reviews.

It is envisaged that the *CARL Education Agenda* will focus on activities that ensure that LIS students are both prepared for and interested in pursuing careers in CARL libraries. CARL considers it important to work with Canada's LIS programs to prepare students for academic library careers. To this end, the group recommended:

- the formalization of relations between CARL and CCIS,
- the development of co-operative and internship programs for LIS students in CARL libraries,

- the development of Scholars-in-Residence programs for LIS faculty in CARL libraries (similar to the one in place at the University of Saskatchewan Library),
- and the development of a profile that will identify skills and competencies needed by academic librarians.
- The group also recommended the development of a CARL position statement that outlines the expectation for continued professional development and lifelong learning for those working in academic libraries.

Conclusions – lessons learned from the work of the group

Through this presentation I hope I have left you with a sense of how one sector through its membership body has moved from receiving the 8Rs information to action. I hope I have also given you a sense of what CARL Directors see as important to their sector and their individual libraries.

There is a strong presence of CARL Directors in attendance at this summit and I think this is a significant indication of our willingness to engage on the issues before the summit and to partner with others to undertake collaborative action and to find creative solutions to the many challenges unearthed by the 8Rs research.

References:

- Library Education Working Group: Final Report to the CARL Board of Directors.
Spring 2008
http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/untitled/0802e_libeduwrk_report.pdf
- Library Education Working Group National Research Agenda Survey
[Survey results parts 1 and 2](#)
- Research Competencies Course for Librarians of CARL Member Institutions
http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/Reports/carl_lewg_product_description-e.pdf
- Current membership list
http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/library_education_members-e.html
- Mandate and terms of reference
http://www.carl-abrc.ca/about/working_groups/library_education_mandate-e.html
- Lamothe, Jane & Williamson, Vicki (2008) *What's keeps CARL Directors' awake at night?* CARL e-Lert #265, February 15.